

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4059

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5597

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJ: SHMUEL TAMIR'S VIEWS ON ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES

REF: TEL AVIV 5587

1. KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS AFFIRM THAT ARTICLE TRANSMITTED REFTEL
CORRECTLY REFLECTS SHIFT IN VIEWS BY LIKUD (FREE CENTER) LEADER
SHMUEL

TAMIR TOWARD FLEXIBILITY ON ISSUE OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE.
HOWEVER, IMPORTANT TO BEAR IN MIND THAT TAMIR'S VIEWS WILL NOT
EASILY FIND THEIR WAY INTO OFFICIAL LIKUD POLICY, WHICH IS STILL
FORMULATED BY BEGIN AND HIS HERUT FACTION.

2. TAMIR'S SHIFT, IN FACT, IS WIDELY ATTRIBUTED TO CONTINUING
FRUSTRATION AT HIS INABILITY TO OVERCOME DOMINATION OF LIKUD BY
HERUT, TO WHICH HE FORMERLY BELONGED BEFORE GOING INDEPENDENT
AS RESULT PERSONALITY CLASH WITH BEGIN. HIS FRUSTRATION IS
HEIGHTENED BY FACT THAT HIS FOUR-MAN KNESSET GROUP PROVIDES HIM
LITTLE PARLIAMENTARY LEVERAGE.

3. PRESS HAS ALSO NOTED TAMIR'S "SOFT APPROACH" TOWARD PM RABIN
COMPARED WITH HIS VERBAL ATTACKS ON FORMER PM MEIR. SPECULA-
TION IS THAT TAMIR, WHO CARRIES REPUTATION OF OPPORTUNIST, IS KEEP-
ING SELF IN LINE FOR CABINET POST SHOULD NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT
BE FORMED--AS HE ADVOCATES. HE IS ALSO KNOWN TO BE SINCERELY
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CONCERNED RE FURTHER ISOLATION OF LIKUD ON TERRITORIAL QUESTION

SHOULD NRP JOIN GOVT.

4. TAMIR IS NOT ONLY LIKUD MEMBER TO ADVOCATE GREATER FLEXIBILITY ON TERRITORY IN RECENT PAST. IN EARLY JULY MK'S HALEVY (THIRD IN HERUT HIERARCHY) AND ABRAMOV (LIBERAL) JOINED WITH TWO LABOR PARTY DOVES IN APPEALING FOR BROADENED COALITION ON PLATFORM OF PEACE THROUGH TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE. TEL AVIV MAYOR LAHAT (LIBERAL), ALSO DURING SUMMER, SIGNED PETITION CALLING ON GOVT TO CONFRONT REALISTICALLY ISSUE OF PALESTINIANS.

5. WE WOULD FINALLY CAUTION AGAINST CONSIDERING TAMIR TO HAVE BECOME A "DOVE," EXCEPT IN LIKUD CONTEXT. ON CONTRARY, AS ARTICLE REFTEL MAKES CLEAR TAMIR WOULD PROBABLY BE AMONG FIRST TO CRITICIZE ANY GOVT WHICH DID NOT RECEIVE MEANINGFUL "COUNTERVALUE" IN RETURN FOR FURTHER WITHDRAWAL, (COUNTERVALUE MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY TAMIR AS FULL PEACE). HE IS CONCERNED, RATHER, THAT RIGIDITY PERSONIFIED BY BEGIN LEAVES LIKUD UNABLE BY DEFINITION TO INSIST ON "COUNTERVALUE" BEFORE BEING PRESENTED WITH NEGOTIATED FAIT ACCOMPLI.

6. WE WILL BE INTERESTED IN DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS AFTER MEETINGS WITH TAMIR IN WASHINGTON.
VELIOTES

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